

Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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So. Baptist food aid distributed in Iraq

CENTRAL IRAQ (BP and local reports) — Iraqis cheered as a volunteer team moved through their neighborhood to give out cartons of food sent by Southern Baptist churches across America.

Children ran up to the five Southern Baptist men from Calvary Church in Winston-Salem, N.C., like they were long-lost uncles, giggling and

The 10-day project in late October and early November was just a small part of a massive, months-long Southern Baptist effort to help the Iraqi people.

During late October the last of 69 truckload-sized cargo containers — carrying a total of some 45,000 boxes of food — arrived by truck and were off-loaded in a warehouse for distribution to needy people across Iraq.

Many thousands of Southern Baptists in America had stuffed each carton with about 70 pounds of flour, sugar and other basic foodstuffs, enough to feed a family of four for several weeks. If all 45,000 cartons could be stacked up, the pile would have been more than eight miles high.

Mississippi Baptists donated over 232,000 pounds of food to the campaign in May of this year. Jim Didlake, director of Men's Ministry for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, traveled to Iraq with the Southern Baptist team to assist in delivering the boxes.

In one neighborhood, hundreds of food boxes were delivered to a school building in a poor area far from downtown. People have built modest homes of mud bricks on land taken by squatter's rights. Raw sewage runs through the dirt streets and livestock wanders unimpeded.

Although few people in the community spoke English, they understood who was bringing the food. One man said it was the Christians from America bringing the food. "Where are the Muslims?" the man asked, recounted volunteer Doug Wells, a sales analyst with a major bak-



MISSION ACCOMPLISHED — Southern Baptist workers give a box of food to a woman and two of her three children in central Iraq. The food box was one of thousands sent by Southern Baptist churches to help the Iraqi people. (BP photo by Mike Creswell)

ing company in Winston-Salem. "It struck me that the people realize we're trying to help them, and we're trying to show them the love of Christ."

The need for food became clear one afternoon when delivery of the food boxes was delayed. A noisy crowd gathered outside the school. One woman cried aloud. People jostled at a window, trying to shove their identity cards in to Iraqi helpers who were identifying people on the needy list.

Some food boxes were distributed through Muslim mosques, which function as community centers. One local leader said the mosque maintains a list of needy families

and delivered food to those. He also said he knows of many families whose men died in Iraq's wars.

"The Iraqi people suffered under Saddam Hussein and they are still suffering," he said, adding that people need medicine as well as food.

Providing food through the mosques led to one mosque leader publicly thanking God for Southern Baptists in America and the food they sent. The Calvary Church members and the other volunteers eventually went home, happy to have helped.

More on Iraq ministry efforts: <http://www.imb.org/urgent>.



NEW FRIENDS

— Southern Baptist volunteer Jim Walker (center) was a big hit with Iraqi kids as he delivered food in central Iraq. Walker is a member of Calvary Church in Winston-Salem, N.C. (BP photo by Mike Creswell)

jostling to get close. Mothers handed over their babies to be held, and the few men around extended greetings.

If there were any anti-American feelings, they were well-hidden in this impoverished Shiite Muslim village, where some families have had relatives killed or tortured under the regime of Saddam Hussein.

"It reminded me of kids coming up to Jesus," marveled Jim Walker, a digital press artist from East Bend, N.C.

WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

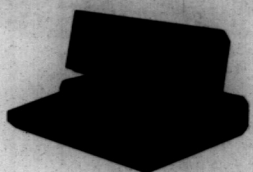
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Our date with destruction

Given the assignment of reporting on how entire societies somehow go mad, even the most casual student of history could come up with an "A" paper. The past is filled with great countries and forward-looking societies that eventually end up on the trash heap of human history.

There was the Roman Empire, for example. One of the mightiest and most far-reaching empires of all time, the Romans fell into such distraction and debauchery that the loosely-organized Germanic barbarians known as Vandals were able to simply walk across the empire's poorly-guarded borders and eventually sack Rome in 450 A.D.

There are plenty more similar sordid stories dotting the human landscape since someone first began to keep records. Much can be learned from the mistakes of other doomed societies, but Americans don't seem to be paying much attention as we hurtle toward our own date with destruction. A much-reported news event from last week seems to bear out this troubling observation.

On November 5, U.S. President George W. Bush signed into law a bill passed by bipartisan majorities in both houses of Congress that prohibits the horrific procedure known as partial birth abortion or D & X (dilation and extraction). The procedure is simply too violent and bloody to describe here, but its inhumanity needs to be known. Those with a strong stomach can read what one unsuspecting nurse witnessed during this ghastly procedure that allows a doctor to literally tear a full-term infant from its mother's womb and kill it at the last moment of delivery. The nurse's testimony before a congressional subcommittee can be accessed at <http://www.sbc Baptist Press.org/bpnews.asp?ID=17012>.

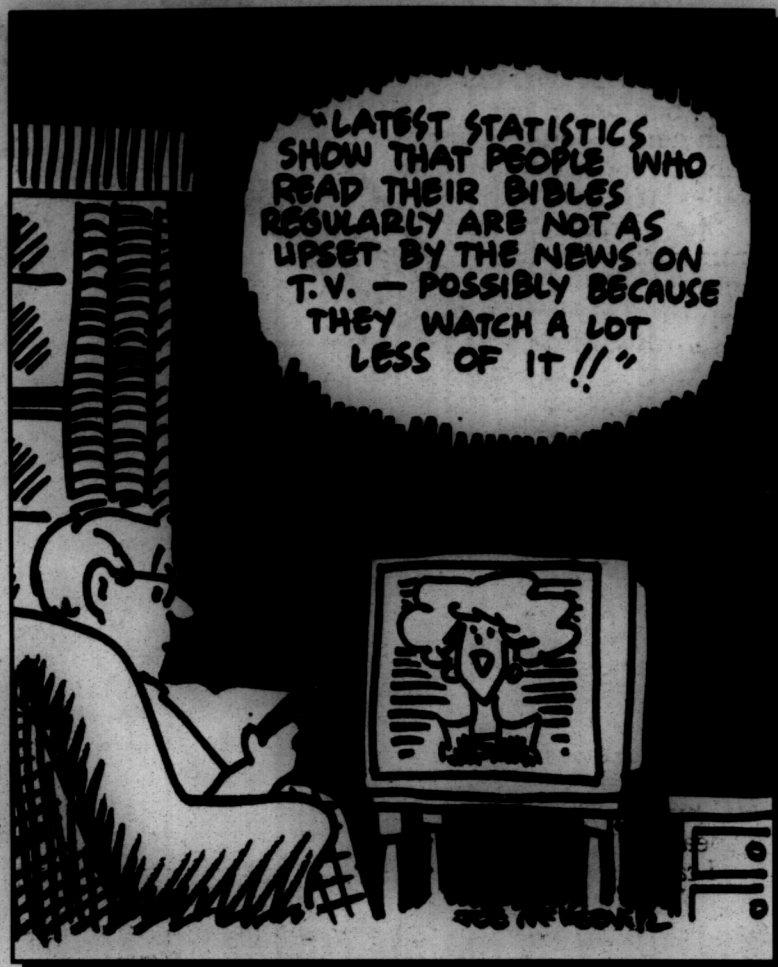
"Today at last the American people have confronted the violence and come to the

defense of the innocent child," Bush said upon signing the legislation. Now, a rational person would be forgiven for thinking that this law is a good idea that goes all the way back to the Declaration of Independence when life was declared an "inalienable right" by the Founders. A baby only inches from delivery and capable of living on its own in a matter of seconds would certainly fall into that category, right?

Wrong. The merchants of American infanticide, wrapping themselves in the high-sounding nobility of rhetoric, are livid about the new child-protection law. "This bill marks a concerted effort to set back decades of progress in achieving reproductive freedom," said Gloria Feldt, president of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America — the largest and most profitable provider of abortions in the country.

Reproductive freedom. Doesn't that sound nice? The willful destruction of a defenseless human being is nothing more than reproductive freedom to death merchants and some federal judges — at least three of whom have already issued injunctions to keep the law from going into effect. The slaughter of innocent life in America continues, unabated.

There was a time in history when unwanted infants were simply taken to the edge of town and abandoned (usually at the town's garbage dump). There the babies would freeze or starve to death, and most were eaten by wild animals. Like America today, people simply looked the other way.



A society that loses reverence for the lives of its youngest members quickly loses reverence for all life. If all life is not respected, a society eventually loses respect for anything else that is moral or ethical. Violence, thievery, and perversion become so commonplace that such behavior is considered acceptable (Romans 1:32). All semblance of virtue is eventually lost.

A people without virtue will not survive. Perhaps some society far into the future, studying the fall of our great nation, will take that lesson to heart.

GUEST OPINION:

An alternative to trash TV

By Chip Turner, FamilyNet vice-president
for marketing and distribution
Ft. Worth, Texas



with quality, family-friendly, child-safe programming.

From TruthQuest: California (a FamilyNet production for youth done in cooperation with LifeWay and Baptist Press) to Mary Lou's Flip Flop Shop (a half-hour children's show with Olympic gold medalist and Southern Baptist Mary Lou Retton) to Swan's Place (a full hour of wholesome entertainment hosted by Southern Baptist humorist Dennis Swanberg), there's something for the entire family.

In addition to a safe haven for family viewing, the Good News is proclaimed on FamilyNet in full-length programming as well as spot announcements and, in concert with the North American Mission Board's Evangelism Response Center (ERC), seeking viewers are able to call a toll-free telephone num-

ber and talk with someone who cares about them.

Five Mississippi Baptist churches are already designated as ERC Covenant Churches and 38 trained ERC Telephone Encouragers (TEs) serve from your state. Additional Covenant Churches are being sought so those responding to television and radio programming can be referred to a caring fellowship which will reach out to them. As FamilyNet grows, so will the need for more Covenant Churches and TEs, not only in Mississippi but throughout North America.

The good news for Jackson area residents is that FamilyNet became available several months ago, full-time on Time Warner digital basic cable channel 172. We are also grateful to have FamilyNet low-power television affiliates in Grenada

and Tupelo. If you are able to receive FamilyNet programming on one of these television outlets, please take a moment to thank them for carrying the network. You will be making an investment in the ongoing success of FamilyNet and our ministry to America's families.

Unfortunately, many Mississippi families still do not have access to your Southern Baptist network. May I suggest an action individuals can employ to impact television viewing choices? Help bring FamilyNet to all Mississippi homes. If currently a cable or satellite subscriber, concerned Baptists can ask their television provider to add FamilyNet to the current lineup of channel options. Satisfied customers are very important to these providers and they do not want to lose them. For those not currently subscribing but who would like to have access to such programming, a contact to these same television outlets represents the potential for a new customer and raises the interest of the management.

For more information on becoming involved in offering a wholesome alternative in TV viewing, Mississippi Baptists are invited to visit our website at www.familynet.org, or call us toll-free at (800) 832-6638.

California pastor, wife lose all in wildfire

EL CAJON, Calif. (BP) — With shaking hands, Helen Winterton prayed for God to help her drive her car piled with her belongings out of the dense, black smoke in Peutz Valley at 5 a.m. Oct. 26.

She prayed 2 Timothy 1:7 from Scripture: "For God does not give us a spirit of fear, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline."

"Praying that was the only thing that got me through," said Winterton, whose husband, Bob, age 68, is the pastor of Trinity Church in El Cajon, Calif. "I told God I needed those things [in the Scripture] right then. All I could do was rehearse what I knew."

Out of 100 homes in the Peutz Valley near San Diego, about eight or nine are still standing.

At 4:15 a.m. on Sunday morning, Oct. 26, Helen, age 65, got a call to evacuate their home as flames were approaching. Her husband was in Nevada at a speaking engagement.

"I called my youngest son and he had a team of people over by 5 a.m. to load up trucks and get me out of there," said Helen, who had lived in the house on three acres for 12 years. In five hours, the entire valley was destroyed.

After the devastation, her daughter first returned to the house and could hear a gas and electric worker yell to someone to call the coroner's office because they had found two bodies in the rubble by the home. Helen was able to visit the site on Friday, Oct. 31. "I am so thankful for these kids who helped me out. We were able to get out in time."

The Wintertons, who started Trinity Church in 1969, have four children, 17 grandchildren, and 15 great-grandchildren.

"Our home was a great place for the family," said Helen of the 3,000-square-foot home once surrounded by tall sycamore trees with hanging tire swings. "We will miss that."

After escaping to her son's house nearby, his family was evacuated. "We ended up sleeping on the church floor for a couple of hours before church started," said Helen, who is the

and we're not at a shelter."

After Bob led a child to Christ and three others joined the church during the Sunday morning service at his church Nov. 2, he expressed how thank-



SUPPORT HUG — Longtime church member Patty Denton (center) gives pastor Robert Winterton (right) a hug after he and his wife Helen (left) lost their home in Southern California's wildfires. (BP photo by Morris Abernathy)

church pianist. "I woke up that day to get ready for church and played the piano. Bob's worst fears were told to him on Monday morning when his plane landed."

Winterton lost all 1,140 volumes in his library, including commentaries that cannot be replaced. "Those are the only things that I wish we could've saved. Everything else can be bought again. I'm amazed at what they did get out," he said.

Helen and her son's crew were able to save most of Bob's clothes and half of her clothes, some jewelry and china from Bob's great-grandmother. The couple is now being housed in a small one-bedroom apartment until they can find a place to rent.

"The most important thing is my relationship with the Lord," Helen reflected. "With Him we realize these are just things. We're grateful nobody has been hurt in our family

ful he is to God. "We know that all things work together for good," he told the congregation. "God is a wonderful God. I assure you we'll do just fine."

With the wildfires now contained, Baptist churches are banding together for the cleanup phase and in other ministry efforts. "As early as Monday we'll send out cleanup crews who will help people sift through the ashes looking for jewelry and other valuables," said Paul Wilkerson, director of missions for Inland Empire Association where nearly 1,000 homes were destroyed by the San Bernardino wildfire, called the Old Fire.

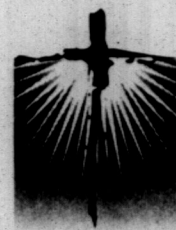
The 182-member association continues to send volunteers from the local Southern Baptist churches to staff a portable shower unit and prepare and serve meals through a mobile kitchen unit at the San Bernardino Airport evacuation site.

The late-October wildfires burned about 750,000 acres in five Southern California counties, destroying more than 3,600 homes. The fires temporarily displaced about 80,000 people but many of those have returned to their neighborhoods to assess the damage to their homes after evacuation orders were lifted, according to Associated Press (AP) reports.

The Old Fire was fully contained on November 5. The Cedar Fire in San Diego County and the Simi Valley area blaze were declared fully contained earlier in the week, and firefighters on Thursday reported other major still-smoldering blazes — the Piru and Paradise fires — more than 95% contained. Two fire-related fall victims have pushed the death toll to 24, the AP reported.

"Most people in the shelter are from the mountain communities who are waiting for their electricity to be turned on," Wilkerson said. "The number of people there [at the San Bernardino Airport shelter] is significantly lower than it was a week ago." He estimated Southern Baptist volunteers are continuing to serve nearly 500 meals a day.

Tuan Nguyen, director of



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

**THE
SECOND
FRONT PAGE**

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missions for the San Fernando Association where the Santa Clarita fires hit, is sending volunteers to help in San Bernardino.

"Although we've had fires, all our churches are in good shape," Nguyen reported. "The firemen really protected our homes here and there is no need for help."

Many of his churches' members, however, want to help the San Bernardino victims. "We're referring people who want to help to Don Hargis," Nguyen said. "He will send them to areas of need."

Hargis, the California Southern Baptist Convention's men's director and disaster relief head, has been in the lead role for coordinating emergency efforts for Southern California churches affected by the fires.

In San Diego County, Hargis is hoping to bring in Baptist Builders to help rebuild homes in communities completely destroyed by the fires.

"Many of the residents didn't have insurance," Hargis said. "We want to help them rebuild."

Looking back

10 years ago

President Bill Clinton's rebuke of the U.S. Justice Department's new definition of child pornography is on target but his call for new legislation is not, say critics of Attorney General Janet Reno's latest statements.

20 years ago

Proclaiming Christ's church was not created as a "two-party system" which elevates clergy over laity, participants in the 11th annual lay renewal conference explore the biblical meanings of ministry and how people in the pew should minister.

50 years ago

Trustees of Mississippi Woman's College in Hattiesburg recommend to the Mississippi Baptist Convention that they be authorized to set up a coeducational program, change the school's name, and amend the school's charter.

...the state's laws against same-sex marriage violate the New Jersey constitution, which was written in 1947. "The right to marry has always been understood in law and tradition to apply only to couples of different genders," she wrote. "A change in that basic understanding would not lift a restriction on the right, but would work a fundamental transformation of marriage into an arrangement that could never have been within the intent of the Framers of the 1947 Constitution. Significantly, such a change would contradict the established and universally accepted legal precept that marriage is the union of people of different genders." She said any change should occur in the state legislature, not the courts. Lambda Legal, which is representing the seven couples, said it will appeal. The case is one of two that some social conservatives fear will result eventually in the legalization of same-sex marriage. The other case is in Massachusetts, where a ruling by that state's highest court is pending. The case now goes on to the state appeals court. It could wind up before the New Jersey Supreme Court, which is considered one of the more liberal courts in the country. In October an Arizona appeals court ruled against a similar challenge to the state's marriage law.

Mt. Olive church goes from dream to reality

By Stuart Kellogg, member
Ridgecrest Church, Madison

At Ridgecrest Church, Madison, every member has been challenged to take part in at least one mission project by the end of 2004. No project typifies this growing congregation's outreach more than the work going on just an hour south of the church in Mt. Olive.



RAISING THE ROOF — Volunteers prepare to install a new metal roof on the abandoned building in Mt. Olive that will soon house the worshippers of Mt. Olive Ministries. Ridgecrest Church, Madison, has joined with groups from across the nation to make the church's new home a reality. (BR special photo by Stuart Kellogg)

Measuring, sawing, and hammering were going on within the abandoned cinderblock walls of a former Dodge dealership in Mt. Olive as the thermometer

reached the low 90s this past summer. A few big fans stirred the humid air as volunteers from Ridgecrest Church sweated to make one man's vision a reality. Tony C. Duckworth grew up in Mt. Olive. On a Wednesday night almost two decades ago he accepted Christ as his personal Savior, and was called to the ministry shortly after graduating from Mt. Olive High School in 1987. He's scheduled to graduate from Southeast Baptist College in Laurel next May with a major in Bible and a minor in business. It's taken about a dozen years to complete the degree, and in the meantime a ministry was born and a vision launched.

Duckworth established Mt. Olive Ministries, which eventually moved into a small abandoned gas station. The refurbished building now includes a nursery school, after-school programs, leadership development for at-risk children, and family development programs to help strengthen the home. Pre-marital counseling is also provided.

The focus, however, is on the young and includes lots of basic instruction, specifically phonics. "My two children learned phonics early and they're 'A' students. The children who don't learn phonics fail. It's pretty obvious that children need the basics to succeed in school," Duckworth said.

Mt. Olive Ministries now touches 500 people a year, but it was clear that something was missing. The teenagers saved by Christ weren't welcome in area churches.

"These were bad kids — stealing, doing drugs, involved in gangs. They accepted Christ and were changed people, but they needed a church. In 1998 God revealed to me to start a church for these changed lives. He wanted a church where He was the focus point," Duckworth said.

Services started in January 1999 with five people in the cramped ministries building. Soon family members and even churchgoers dissatisfied with their church homes joined those saved from the street. Too many people were confusing Mt. Olive Ministries with Mt. Olive Community Church. It was time to move, and touch more lives.

Duckworth and his team looked for property and settled on the long-abandoned car dealership. A plan to refurbish the property was put in place at a cost of about \$75,000.

Ridgecrest Church member Luther Lee is the volunteer certified public accountant for

Mt. Olive Ministries. He caught the vision and shared it with the staff at Ridgecrest Church. The project fit in with Senior Pastor Phil Walker's challenge that every one of the 2,700 church members to go on a mission trip during the next two years.

The mission focus meant a great challenge for James Ellington, a Madison County homebuilder and head of the church's Board of Deacons. "We were looking for a project for the deacons. I came down in March and it just came to me — we can do this!"

Canton architect Joseph Orr hopped on his motorcycle and traveled to Mt. Olive. Ellington recalled Orr's

reaction: "He saw it as a rebirth of the building, a rebirth of the community, and a rebirth of the lives that were saved just like Tony's."

A number of Christian groups from across the nation have pitched in along with Ridgecrest Church to move the project toward completion.

It took about \$20,000 to buy the land and building. Duckworth is giving up his \$2,000 a month salary until the debt is paid off. How will he support his family? "The Lord will provide," he said.

On the Saturday before Labor Day 2003, Duckworth's vision was coming into focus. The boards were hammered into famed walls and nailed into the concrete floor. Classrooms, meeting rooms, and a temporary sanctuary will soon come to life.

"The Lord has impressed upon us that there is an urgency to do this," Walker said. "He is moving around the globe to bring revival, and we don't want to miss one opportunity that He lays before us."

For more information on the project, contact Stacy Andrews at Ridgecrest Church, (601) 853-1090. E-mail: sandrews@rcbc.org.



Duckworth

CHANGE

Some time ago, I was visiting in one of our churches and was walking around the facilities speaking to people and observing activities that were going on. I came to the preschool area where the toddlers and bed babies were and they had the entryway into that area fixed so nicely. It was inviting and appealing for both children and parents. The sign at the entryway especially caught my attention. The sign said, "The Only Place Where Change is Welcome." I, along with anyone who would come that way, would have to pause and smile, for basically none of us are geared up to welcome change.

Recently, I was speaking at a meeting in Leake County and I heard their Associational Missions Director, Joe Abel, make an insightful and accurate comment. He said that there are two things that Baptists just cannot stand: 1) change, and 2) the same old thing. Probably, more than we would want to admit, that not only is true, but it is true of me and you! The fact is, change is inevitable! It takes place whether we like it or not, whether we do something or not, and whether we adjust to it or not — change is going to continue!

They used to say that the only time you would stop changing is when you came to the cemetery, but that is not true. Change even

continues there. The landscape changes, the temperature and humidity changes, and the gradual loss of the person in the casket continually changes. Regardless of your age and stage of life, you are going to have to face change. The way you and I adjust to change, deal with it, resist it, embrace it, or determine it, makes a difference in us and in our world.

Since change is coming down the road like a freight train and is not going to back up, what is the best way to go about dealing with it? I suppose it's that feature about change that distinguishes whether people live with a sense of harmony as change comes, or live irritated, aggravated, and generally out of sorts about change. Let me suggest four possibilities of dealing with change:

1. **Fight** — I have known folks who spent the majority of their waking time just watching for something to change by one centimeter so they could raise Cain! It's not that they are against the Lord, against doing good things, having a vision, or enlarging the Kingdom — it's just that they don't want change! Instead, they sit with fists clenched, jaws tight, and eyes focused to find the next battleground against



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

change. It really doesn't matter what, where, or when — they are ready to fight!

2. **Invite** — My time or space will not permit, but I would have to caution that this approach to change can be as harmful as those who only fight. For you see, change is not always bad nor is it always good. At times, change can be both and neither. It is not a wise thing to spend all of your time inviting change.

3. **Recite** — I mean by this that we ought to spend time looking at change. We need to look at how change will affect us and those around us, the long-term significance, and how it will affect the future. If change is only seen in the momentary (How does it affect me right now?), it is probable that we would still be driving on small little gravel roads. You see, none of us like the orange barrels on the road and it seems like when they begin to expand a road or improve the driving surface, it takes forever! Yet, if we stop and think it through, we would be well served to make an improvement on getting from "Point A"

to "Point B" by being disrupted just for a little while.

If, in the church, we could all live in a fellowship that sought to understand how God could

be leading in His Kingdom work to make a difference, we could recite the circumstances, the disruptions, and then the blessings and benefits that could be ours if we were willing to change.

I know in terms of today's world it sounds silly, but I have known folks who were determined they would not have indoor plumbing at their church. They would fight to the death to keep from having a kitchen in their church. Others were dead set against having any kind of recreation program or family life building in their church. Then there are some who have been opposed to having choir robes and others upset because there were no choir robes.

To recite is to stop and contemplate, think it through, and then see that it is not necessarily harmful and it may even be helpful — so change!

4. **Ignite** — This is to come to the understanding that God is leading His people to do a new thing, to accomplish a new task, to move into a new arena, to provide a new ministry, to glorify Jesus in a new way, and because

God has touched it, let the change begin! Ignite the change with a spark from Heaven. Let the fires of God blaze among us!

When God touched His fledgling church with the power of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, unusual things happened all around that event — sounds, fire, and speech so that they could understand who Jesus was. Yet, many of the people who were around and observing were trying to figure out and analyze what this was all about. Well, what it was about was that God was igniting His people for Kingdom growth! Some of the evaluations that came in simply expressed, "I think these people are drunk!" Others said, "We don't know what is going on!" God knew what was going on and some of His people were so surrendered, so in tune, and so in touch with Him that in a moment they had their lives ignited by the presence of God!

From Scripture, from church history, and from the reality of life today, the people who make a difference for the Kingdom of God are always people who are not frightened by change, do not just fight change, and do not necessarily just invite change. Instead, they ignite change as God uses them!

May there be a sign over the door of the entry way of our hearts that reads, "A place where change from God is welcome."

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

November 13, 2003

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Communication Services.

2004

MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Friday 9 & 10, 2004
Madison Central High School Band Hall
Madison, Miss.

Directions to Madison Central High School

Take 55 North; take the
Madison exit to Hwy. 463
turning west. Hwy. 463 and
Highland Colony Parkway
intersect. Turn left onto
Highland Colony Parkway.
Address is 1417 Highland
Colony Parkway, Madison.

Friday, January 9
6:30 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Saturday, January 10
8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

David Young
Instrumental Consultant
Church Music Department
MBCB

Thank you for your willingness to use your gifts in the Lord's service!

Registration Form

Name of church _____

Name of orchestra director/participant _____

The number of participants _____

Along with this form, please enclose a list of participants' names, the instrument that they play and which part they prefer to play. This is to ensure that ample music will be available the day of the rehearsal. MBSO members, please check with your minister of music. If he/she has mailed this form, you do not need to send a duplicate registration.

Registration Deadline December 12, 2003

Send registration to: Church Music Department • MBSO • P.O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530
"Sharing the Song of Jesus"

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A history book detailing the milestones of Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union over the last 25 years compiled by Sharon Neff. Plus ... you will get the previous books, *Hearts the Lord Opened* by Edwina Robinson (1878-1953) and *Covered Foundations* by Marjean Patterson (the first century of Mississippi WMU) bound together for the first time. *Embracing God's Plan* will be available for the first time at the Annual Missions Celebration, Oct. 8-9, 2004, at Emmanuel Baptist Church, Grenada.

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Please reserve ___ copy(ies) of *Embracing God's Plan*

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___ Check payable to MBCB-WMU enclosed - I will pick up at Annual Missions Celebration at Emmanuel Baptist Church, Grenada, Oct 8-9.

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For the first time, a video with some of the history of Mississippi Women's Missionary Union will be available for your missions education and promotion. The video is a concise story of WMU now and then ... how it began in Mississippi, through the changes and bringing you into the present WMU. The historical

videos will be ready January 2004, and we will have them for sale at state training events like A.L.T. and C.L.T., as well as, the Annual Missions Celebration, Oct 8-9, at Emmanuel Baptist Church, Grenada.

Purchase copies for:

- The church library
- Associational office
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Videos may be prepurchased from Mississippi WMU for \$15.

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___ Check payable to MBCB-WMU enclosed - I will pick up at A.L.T.- (May) - C.L.T. (August) Annual - Missions Celebration at Emmanuel BC, Grenada, Oct 8-9.

___ Check payable to MBCB-WMU enclosed - Please mail to: WMU - History, PO Box 530, Jackson MS 39205-0530

THE SUIT PROJECT

Mississippi Baptists say "Merry Christmas" to pastors in the Alaska, Hawaii, and Iowa Conventions.

What is it?

For over 39 years Mississippi Baptists have enjoyed sending new suits to the pastors in new work areas. This is our way of letting the pastors in these areas of Southern Baptist life know that we care about and support them in their work.

What can you do?

Men's Ministry, RA, and WMU groups, individuals, churches, etc., can send their gifts payable to:

Mississippi Baptist
Convention Board

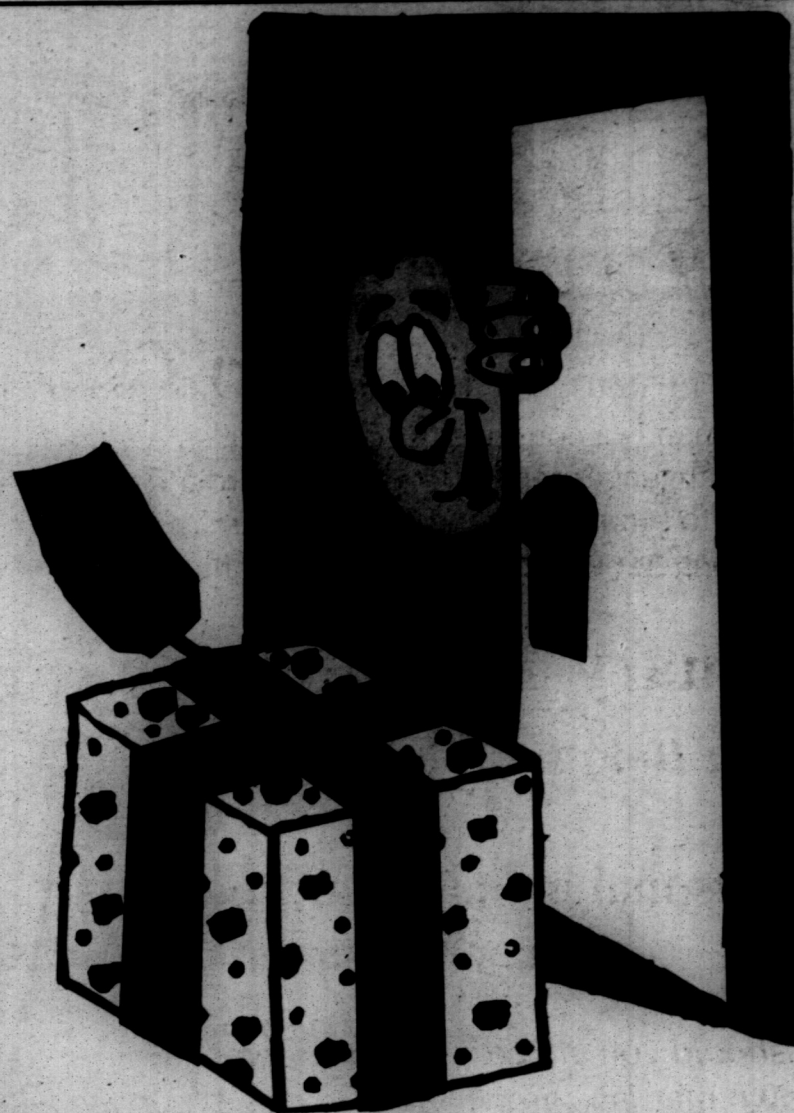
Attention: Men's Ministry Department
P.O. Box 530
Jackson, MS 39205-0530

Cost: \$130 per suit

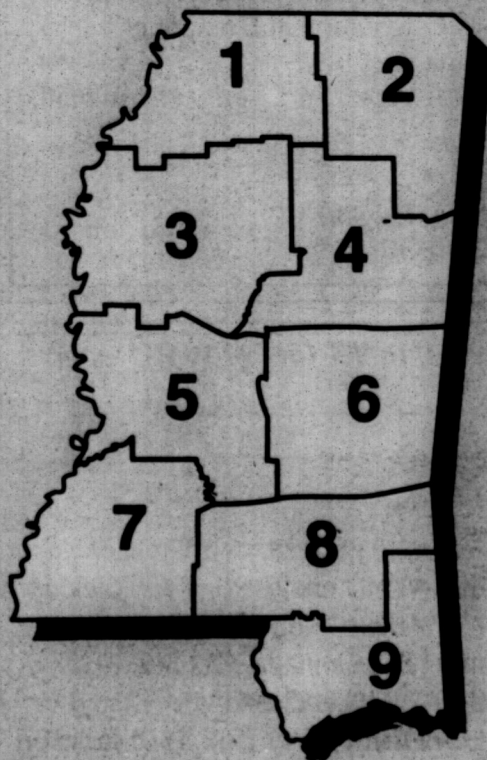
Designate on your check: Suit Project

For more info, contact the
Men's Ministry Department
1-800-748-1651 or 601-292-3335

**SPECIAL MINISTRY FOR THE
PASTORS' WIVES**
If funds are available, we will send
clothing gift certificates for the wives.



AREA KEYBOARD FESTIVALS 2004



Thursday, January 29, 2004 - 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Harrisburg BC, Tupelo, 4675 Cliff Gookin Blvd.
(All Categories)
Fairview BC, Columbus, 127 Airline Rd.
(All Categories)
FBC, Clinton, 100 E. College St.
(Categories I, IA only)
Highland BC, Meridian, 3400 27th St.
(All Categories)
FBC, McComb, 1700 Delaware Ave.
(All Categories)
William Carey College, Hattiesburg, 489 Tuscan Ave.
(All Categories)
FBC, Laurel, 605 W. Fifth Street
(All Categories)

LEADER

Diane Smith

Slater Murphy

Beverly Coleman

Bill Bacon

June Williams

Diann Greer

Kathy Vail

Joy Hughlett

Jimmy Little

PHONE

C-662-842-6917

C-662-328-2924

C-601-924-6716

C-601-482-0191

C-601-684-2971

H-601-264-7443

C-601-649-5710

Friday, January 30, 2004 - 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Hernando BC, Hernando, 11 E. Center St.
(All Categories)
Crossgates BC, Brandon, 8 Crosswoods Rd.
(Categories II, IIA, III, IV only)
FBC, Biloxi, 1560 Popps Ferry Road
(All Categories)

Barry Tweedy

Tommy Creel

Leon Bedsole

C-662-421-6361

C601-825-2562

C-228-396-8500

Saturday, January 31, 2004 - 9:30 a.m. - noon

Emmanuel BC, Grenada, 245 Meadow Brook Rd.
(All Categories)
North Greenwood BC, Greenwood, 615 Grand Blvd.
(All Categories)
Alta Woods BC, Jackson, 168 Colonial Dr.
(Categories II, IIA, III, IV only)

Barry Worrell

Patricia Ethridge

Wyndy South

C-662-226-5316

C-662-453-2801

H-601-957-3615

Toward a Growing Marriage

with Gary Chapman

Gary Chapman is a counselor, popular speaker and author of The Five Love Languages series of books. Toward a Growing Marriage is designed to stimulate strong, healthy marriages – the foundations of strong, growing churches, and reaching others for Christ.

January 10, 2004

Salem Heights BC, Laurel

**A personal invitation from
Gary Chapman**

Why should you attend a marriage seminar? First, to keep you own marriage growing. Marriages either get better or they get worse. They never stand still. Most people prefer a growing marriage. Secondly, to equip you to minister to other couples who turn to you for help. In the church and in the work place, people turn to friends long before they go to a counselor. Toward a Growing Marriage seminars will give you insights on how to help. Personally, I have a third objective: I want to share a vision for starting or developing marriage enrichment in your church. I believe that biblically based marriage enrichment is the key to saving thousands of marriages.

The seminar is filled with lots of humor and practical information based on sound biblical principles. In today's culture, marriage is a challenge, but it can be a joy.

Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union Women's Track - State Evangelism Conference

Tell Your Story

Jesus said, "I am the road, also the truth, also the life. No one gets to the Father apart from me." The Message, John 14:6

MISSISSIPPI STATE EVANGELISM CONFERENCE

One State Evangelism Conference with Two Tracks
Country Woods Baptist Church, Byram
Monday and Tuesday, January 26-27, 2004

The Mississippi WMU Visionary Team and the host church will welcome you.

1:30 p.m. Monday, Women's Track in the Fellowship Hall

Come to the Party!
designed especially for ministers' spouses
Laura Leathers, Teatime Treasures
Praise and Worship Music by
Mandisa Hundley, vocalist for Beth Moore's Praise Team

3 p.m. Monday, Women's Track in the Fellowship Hall

Parties with a Purpose
Page Hughes, Anchor Deep Ministries
Music – Mandisa Hundley
Testimony: How We Lived While Dying – 'Wilda Fancher
Prayer Time

5 p.m. Dinner break on your own

6:30 p.m. Monday Evening Session

All together for the State Evangelism Conference in the Worship Center

9 a.m. Tuesday, Women's Track in the Fellowship Hall

Testimony: God's Unconditional Love – Corinne Gillentine
Music – Mandisa Hundley
Unveiled to Victory
Page Hughes
Prayer Time

11:30 a.m. Lunch break on your own

1:30 p.m. Women's Track in the Fellowship Hall

Testimony: My Passion – Cyndi Grace
Prayer Time
Music – Mandisa Hundley
Tell Your Story
Page Hughes

Closing commitment music by Mandisa Hundley



Page
Hughes



Mandisa
Hundley



Laura
Leathers



'Wilda
Fancher



Corinne
Gillentine



Cyndi
Grace

For more info: Call Miss. WMU at 1-800-748-1651 or 601-292-3319

Pray this day for...

November 14 - December 4, 2003

Prayer Ministry Office • P.O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone (601) 292-3304 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1 (800) 787-7729 (PRAY)

THE HEART OF TRUE PRAYER - "Prayer is about a relationship of knowing, loving, and following God our Father and Jesus our Lord by the power and wisdom of His Holy Spirit."

"PRAYING GOD'S WAY" - Rick Shepherd

For: (1) Missions Mobilization Celebration Banquet, FBC, Jackson, 6 - 9 p.m. (MMOB); (2) Richard Sale, Florence, S.C., is a law enforcement chaplain for the Florence Police Department, S.C. Law Enforcement Division, Highway Patrol, and FBI. Pray for Richard as he ministers to the officers and staff of these departments.

For: (1) Missions Mobilization Conference, Baptist Building, Jackson, 7:30 a.m. - noon (MMOB); (2) Please pray today for President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia (eastern Europe and northern and western Asia).

After full days of ripping out floors and pouring concrete, a recent volunteer team in Bulgaria managed to preach three to four sermons each evening. They also ministered to the love-starved children in the orphanage. Pray that many will be drawn to the Father as a result of this display of love.

Pray for the thousands of Kurdish "internally displaced persons" living in various locations in northern Iraq. Ask the Holy Spirit to identify ways workers can help them make it through the winter and into more permanent housing. Pray for God to move in the midst of these communities and draw them unto Himself.

For: (1) Season of Prayer for International Missions & Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, 30th - Dec. 7 (WMO); (2) Pray for the planning of two volunteer groups to go to a mission in Colombia next year. These groups are very important, as there have not been groups to work with the Refuge Team in many years.

Ask God to open Muslim eyes to the biblical truth of Isaiah 64:4 that all people are sinners whose righteous acts are like filthy garments to our Holy God. Pray that they will hear and receive the Good News that Jesus Christ has become our righteousness through His holy life and sacrificial death.

Pray that the North Brazil and Christian Education Seminaries will develop leaders with a passion for Jesus, Christ-like leadership, and planting churches in Northeast Brazil. Pray that Northeast Christians will contextualize their evangelistic methods to reach this 98 percent unreached people.

The month of Ramadan is difficult for Muslim-background believers who are the only followers of Jesus Christ in their family or community. Pray for them to remain faithful to Christ despite pressure from their family and friends to return to Islam. Pray for their family members to see the Light shining through their lives and become seekers of God.

The Philippine National Collegiate Team is in need of journeymen and ISC workers. Pray for workers to hear the call of God to join them. To reach more students, they need to set up more centers close to the campuses. It rains often, so it is hard to have consistent discipleship outdoors.

Derek Spain (Kim) of Lake Placid, N.Y., is the pastor of Lake Placid Baptist Church and leads a Bible study at the Olympic Training Center. Pray that the athletes would be drawn to Christ.

For: (1) MCB Executive Committee Meeting, 9 a.m.; (2) Mississippi Baptist Convention Board Meeting, 10 a.m.; (3) Amanda Parmley joined the Halka Team in Taiwan in October. Pray the Lord will use her gentle spirit and joyful heart to draw many Halka to Himself.

German-Brazilians live in three southern states of Brazil: Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina, and Parana. They make up one-third to one-half of the total population there. Of the 2.5 million German-Brazilians in Rio Grande do Sul, only 5 percent are Christians. Pray for T who has a passion to plant house churches among them.

Tommy Cupples, of Swansea, Ill., is director of missions with the Metro-East Association. Pray for bi-vocational pastors to lead the small churches in the association, for churches to reach the lost in the area, and for the financial needs of the Christian Activity Center in St. Louis.

For: (1) Baptist Building STAFF AT HOME DAYS, 3rd - 5th; (2) Although openly Christian, Mombasa Baptist High School in Kenya attracts students from all sorts of backgrounds. As students are invited to share lunch with a missionary teacher and his family, pray that God would use that time to build relationships.

Pray for two new chronological Bible storying groups that have formed among the Asian Indians of East Africa. Both groups have believers and non-believers in attendance. Pray for each person to grow in his or her understanding of God.

Thanksgiving Day - Pray that on this day people will give thanks for blessings they have received during the year. God is so good!

"Can I follow Buddha and Jesus?" asked Khun M. of Thailand. "If I can't, I will follow Buddha." Eastern Regional Team members write: Pray that Khun M will know the truth about the One True God and be compelled by the Spirit, despite persecution from society, to follow Him only.

Pray for the Communist Party United Front Work Department personnel, who control religious affairs, to see the benefit of allowing religious freedom for all Christians in China.

As all of the radio frequencies have already been assigned in the Loja Province of Ecuador, Operation Hope (their evangelistic mission agency organization) is seeking to buy an existing FM radio station in that area. Please pray for the final funds needed and that the purchase of the station can be made.

Prime Minister Mahathir will be stepping down from his position after a 22-year reign. As Malaysia moves toward political change, pray for a smooth transition. Pray for a new prime minister who would move the country toward religious freedom, where one could hear about and accept Christ without fear of legal repercussions.

Pray for the children of Iraq. Many live on the streets and are in need of the basic necessities of life. Even more so, they are in need of God's love. Pray that God would grant wisdom in meeting their needs, and ask that He would send laborers to be His hands and His feet to these precious ones.



Saturday, January 3, 2004

Camp Garaywa Staff Reunion
1999, 2000, 2001, 2002 or 2003

YOU ARE INVITED TO A CAMP STAFF REUNION CELEBRATING THE PAST FIVE YEARS of Camp Garaywa summer camp. If you served during the SUMMERS OF 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002 or 2003, please join us for a special celebration at Camp Garaywa on SATURDAY, JAN. 3, 2004, from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

There is NO COST INVOLVED, but you must make reservations.

TO MAKE YOUR RESERVATION, please call the WMU Department at 1-800-748-1651, ext. 322, or e-mail Robin Keels, GA/Acteens Camp consultant, at rkeels@mbcb.org. Please RSVP by Monday, Dec. 15.

The 2003 SUMMER STAFF is invited to an overnight reunion beginning at 6 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 2.

3-01 Miss Jessie M. Crocker
Parents: George & Ginger
Sports Evangelism
Western South America

5-93 Miss Meleah D. Peacock
Parents: Kevin & Brenda
Theological Education
Middle America

15-92 Miss Molly Crocker
Parents: George & Ginger
Sports Evangelism
Western South America

21-97 Mr. Caleb E. Holyfield
Parents: Michael & Patricia
Church Planting
Central & Eastern Europe

26-89 Miss Hannah Ray
Parents: Michael & Linda
Religious Education
Central & Eastern Europe

For secretaries with
children, please
Provide
Child's name and
parent's name
MBCB Stewardship
Department
PO Box 530
Jackson MS 39205

HOUSE TOPS

JUST FOR THE RECORD



Children's Choir of First Church Glendale, Hattiesburg



Brandon Lee Massey & Jeanette Hutchins



125th Anniversary of Highland Church, Tishomingo



Bus Donation; Mount Herman Church, Savannah Tenn.

MISSISSIPPI POSITIONS

STEEPHOLLOW BAPTIST CHURCH, Poplarville, Miss, a mid-sized church seeking part-time (potential full-time) minister of music. Two Sunday morning services plus Wednesday night services. Must lead adult choir. Please call (601) 795-4638 or fax resume (601) 795-4696.

ORGANIST, CASTLEWOODS Baptist Church. Send a letter of interest or resume to 175 Stonecastle Drive, Brandon, MS 39047 via mail or fax. Fax (601) 992-2623. For information call (601) 992-9977.

BRBC OF BILOXI IS SEEKING A part-time minister of youth who has a heart for God and for our youth. Send resumes to Minister of youth search committee, Big Ridge Baptist Church, 3230 Big Ridge Road, D'Iberville, MS 39540.

PIANIST/KEYBOARDIST NEEDED, Southside Baptist Church, paid position. For more information call (601) 372-9161.

MAIN STREET BAPTIST CHURCH, Goodman, Miss is seeking a full-time pastor. Please send letters and/or resumes to Pastor search committee, P.O. Box 206, Goodman, MS 39079. Or email resumes to tarjir2@aol.com.

BEACON BAPTIST CHURCH IS looking for a part-time minister of music. Call (601) 264-6623 or (601) 544-1567 or send resume: 410 Lamar Ave, Hattiesburg, MS 39402 or 510 Maple Ave, Petal, MS 39465.

PART-TIME MINISTER TO STUDENTS, Noxapater Baptist Church is looking for a part-time student minister to work with grades 7-12. Work requirements are Wednesdays and weekends. For more info contact: Noxapater Baptist Church, student minister search committee, P.O. Box 251, Noxapater, MS 39346. (662) 724-2156.



Grace Jenkins, Randy Pierce, pastor; and Louise Williamson

Highland Church, Tishomingo, celebrated their 125th anniversary August 17. Jeremy Harris is pastor. Jimmy Bryant, former pastor, brought the morning message. Lunch was served and special services and music followed. Bobby Cobb, Tishomingo Director of Missions, presented a certificate provided by the Mississippi Baptist Historical Commission to the church. The church honored former deacon and music director Stanley McAnally. Bickey Pennington constructed a stone structure that now displays the old church bell. The bell memorial was completed in July and dedicated in memory of McAnally. Pictured (from left) are Melody, Lori, and Debbie McAnally.

The Older Children's Choir at **First Church Glendale, Hattiesburg**, presented the musical *Splash Kingdom* on October 15.

Mount Herman Church, Savannah, Tenn., recently donated a bus to **St. Paul Believers Southern Church, Tunica**. Pictured (from left) are M. C. Johnson, North Delta Association, Artie Rivers' wife, Artie Rivers, pastor of Mt. Herman, Leon Butler, pastor of St. Paul Believers, and Butler's wife.

Brandon Lee Massey of Eastside Church, Pearl, helps **Jeanette Hutchins**, Faithful Workers Sunday School Class teacher, pack supplies for Jody Wilkerson and Richard Worsham who are stationed in Kuwait.

Volunteers from various churches in the **Jackson County Association** and the men at **Calvary Church, Pascagoula**, installed sheet rock on in the educational building of Calvary Church on September 27.

During August **Calvary's Kids** at **Calvary Church, Pascagoula**, collected items for state missions for Christmas. The children presented *Down by the Creek* September 5.

The senior citizens of **Unity Church, Leaksville**, were honored with a luncheon September 3. Randy Pierce, pastor, is pictured with the youngest senior, Grace Jenkins, and the oldest Louise Williamson. The oldest couple present was Gavin and Elnora Breland. The youth girls helped to prepare the meal, decorate, serve, and clean up.

Holly Springs Church, Foxworth, will have Hanging of the Green on November 30 at 10 a.m. There will be no morning Sunday School. Kevin Crozier is pastor. For more information, call (601) 736-5795.



Calvary Church Kids, Pascagoula



Volunteers from Jackson Association, Pascagoula

Our Brooks family would like to say thank you for being a part of the Branson Condo family since 1992. We have had the privilege to meet so many of our guests and talk with many of them over these years.

Please continue to use and stay in the condo with the Stovall Family in the future. They will do the same accommodations and extra's for your family as in the past.

Thank you again -
The Brooks in Yazoo City, MS

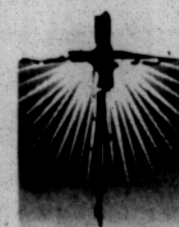
Homecomings & Revivals

Midway, Jackson: Nov. 23, 60th anniversary; luncheon following morning worship; afternoon service around the tables; David Wilkinson, former pastor, speaking; Charles Gentry, pastor

North Columbia, Columbia: Nov. 16-19; Sunday, 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Gene Douglas, preaching; Steve Walker, music; the public is welcome; nursery will be provided; Mike Grenn, pastor; James Bell, minister of music.

Highland, Crystal Springs: Nov. 16; Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.; worship, 10:30 a.m.; dinner, 11:30 a.m.; James Griffith, speaking; David Patterson, pastor.

Calvary Chapel, Parchman: Nov. 23; building dedication of the W. D. and Earline Kirk Family Life Center; harvest dinner, 5:30 p.m.; worship, 6:30 p.m.; Bobby Douglas, Mid-Delta Association, preaching; Truman Scarborough, North Central Association, dedicatory prayer; the center will open in January for one night a week-end for recreational activities.



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

JUST FOR THE RECORD



GAs of Branch Church, Morton

Branch Church, Morton, held a recognition service and banquet, Crafted in God's Hand, for GAs August 23. Each girl was responsible for crafting a center piece for their table. Pictured (from left) are Casey Torrence, Kayla Stevenson, Dana Nelson, Jessica Tagert, and Brittany Tagert.



GAs of New Prospect, Brookhaven

The GAs of **New Prospect Church, Brookhaven**, collected over 60 stuffed lambs for their Christmas in August project. The lambs are a ministry of Ella McCarroll, Texas, who ministers to mothers of premature and critically ill babies. Pictured (from left, front) are Victoria Smith, Haley Ainsworth, (back) Rebecca Case, Anna Grace Brown, and Jessica Franklin.

The GAs of **First Church Glendale**,

Hattiesburg, were recognized September 7. Awards for World Ventures, attendance, and ministry projects were given. Pictured are the participants.

Central Grove Church, Aberdeen, celebrated a note burning September 6 for the retirement of debt of a new worship center. Pictured (from left, front) are Beverly Haney, Bailey Haney, E.G. Nicholson Jr., T. J. Tucker, Paula Andrews, and (back) Dennis Smith, pastor.

Paul Leber, Sr., retired from Oak Grove Church, Philadelphia. He presented his retirement speech October 26. Leber graduated from Columbia International University of South Carolina, and Southwestern Baptist Seminary, and has pastored churches in Maryland, Texas, South Carolina, and Mississippi. He will continue to supply preach as needed.

Six of the 11 **Senior Saints of West Salem Church, Richton**, recently went to Eureka Springs, Ark. The group attended the



Senior Saints of West Salem Church, Richton

Great Passion Play, and visited the Christ of the Ozarks Statue, the Covenant Gardens, and Thorncrown Chapel. Pictured (from left) are Helen James, Flora Smith, Claudette Lindsey, Jane Henderson, Emma Ruth Henderson, and Donnis Byrd.



GAs of First Church Glendale, Hattiesburg



Central Grove Church Note Burning, Aberdeen

STATE CHANGES

First Church, Petal, has called **Jay Spiller** as pastor effective August 10. He comes from Camden Church, Camden, Ala.

Spiller is a graduate of the University of Alabama and NOBTS. He has served churches in Mississippi and Alabama.

Cliff Temple Church, Natchez, has called **Arron McGuffee** as interim pastor effective November 2. McGuffee is currently continuing his education at NOBTS.

COLLEGE & SEMINARY NEWS

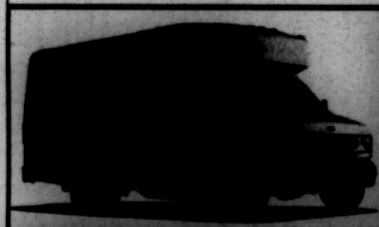
William Carey College students placed first in their divisions at the state Mississippi Music Teachers Association (MMTA) conference held recently at Jones County Junior College. MMTA is affiliated with the Music Teachers National Association. Armin Abdihodzic, Bihac, Bosnia, won first place for junior/senior guitar solo. Shanna Carey, Tuscaloosa, Ala., won first place in the junior/senior opera category. She also placed second in the senior division of the voice

solo category. Derrick Meador, Laurel, won first place in the junior/senior organ category. Nathan Sumrall, Hattiesburg, won first place for junior/senior piano solo. Carey and other vocalists from WCC will compete at the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) regional conference at Mississippi College in November.

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MINISTER OF MUSIC, TRINITY UNITED Methodist, Opelika, Alabama. Salary \$40,000-60,000. The minister of music is responsible for leading and overseeing the entire ministry of music. Trinity is a conservative, evangelical church called to be an equipping center for the purpose of winning and discipling Christians. Contact: Scott Kaak at (334) 745-2632.

LEESVILLE - FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH: Full-time youth and recreation minister. Send resumes with photo to: Youth Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church of Leesville, P.O. Box 1568, 1400 Nolan Trace, Leesville, LA 71446; or email fbcleesville@wnonline.net.

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NORTH MONROE BAPTIST CHURCH is looking for a full-time student minister.

Email resumes to youthsearch@northmonroe.com. Or mail them to North Monroe Baptist Church at 210 Finks Hideaway Road, Monroe, LA 71203. You can learn more about the church and its ministries at www.northmonroe.com.

CHURCH PEW UPHOLSTERY, free estimates. Davis Upholstery, Quitman, Miss., phone (601) 776-6617.

CALLING ALL CHRISTIANS! BLESSED Hope Communications new agent opportunities available. Call (866) 864-7025. 4.9 cents LD, 3.9 cents calling cards. Visit www.REALifeSolutions.org.

TRAVEL ENGLAND, IRELAND, Scotland and Wales May 25-June 9, 2004. Call Bill and Margarita Stanford at (601) 924-1593 for a brochure describing 16 exciting days rich in history, culture, religious roots and hospitality.

LARGE ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI Church prayerfully seeks dynamic full-time minister of worship. Duties: leading worship services in contemporary/blended style, directing adult choirs in rehearsal/worship. Coordinating vocal, instrumental ensembles and major music/drama productions. Evangelistic heart a must. Send resumes to Worship search committee, Fee Fee Baptist Church, 11330 St. Charles Rock Road, Bridgeton, MO 63044.

FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

Taking the Good News to Others

Acts 13:1-3, 28-32, 38-39, 45-48

By Jon Daniels

Isn't it great to be able to give someone some good news, especially if that person has gone through some tough times in their life? Like giving a gift to someone, the giving of good news warms our hearts as we share it with the recipient.

Of course, the greatest Good News that we can share with anyone is the life-changing Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. What a privilege it is for us to be the bearers of this message to a lost and dying world! This is what we have been called and commissioned to do by Jesus. Are you taking that call seriously? We must take the Good News to others wherever they may be - in our own communities, our state, our nation, and the world.

Every believer needs to have the heart of a missionary.

Henry Martyn, 19th century missionary to India and Persia, once said, "The Spirit of Christ is the spirit of missions, and the nearer we get to Him, the more intensely missionary we must become." Our missionary hearts will take us across the street, across town, or across the world to tell a lost person about the love of God in Christ Jesus. The Gospel is for all people, and you and I need to identify ways in which we will participate in taking it to all people.

SET APART TO SHARE - 13:1-3

God started the worldwide mission of the Gospel by leading the church to dedicate and set apart two experienced evangelists. This is the first significant breakthrough in the New Testament for the spread of the Gospel.



Daniels

Paul and Barnabas led the church's mission efforts among the Gentiles.

These men responded in obedience as the Holy Spirit spoke and called them to deliver the message of salvation to the lost.

You and I have also been set apart to share the Gospel. It is the greatest responsibility that we've been given as Christians. God could have chosen any way that He desired to take the message of the Gospel to the world, but He chose us and set us apart for this job. Samuel Gordon said, "The way to a human heart is through a human heart."

SHARE THE TRUTH - 13:28-32

Paul and Barnabas took the Gospel to the Jews and the Gentiles in Antioch where they shared in the synagogue. They made a very clear presentation of the truth of the Gospel, sharing how Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies in His death, burial, and resurrection. They clearly told the good

news. Their boldness and obedience is inspiring to all of us.

Wherever the Lord may lead us to take the Good News, we must be sure that we clearly share the truth. Whether we are participating in our church's outreach visitation, going on a short-term mission trip within the United States, or committing our lives to a career as a missionary with NAMB or the IMB, we must know the truth and clearly share the truth with the lost.

SHARE FORGIVENESS - 13:38-39

Knowing that we are forgiven of all our sins is an incredible thing. When we accept Christ, all of our sins are forgiven once and for all. This is the "global cleansing" that comes with becoming a Christian, and it can never be taken away. It gives us the keys to the kingdom, brings us back into a relationship with God, and gives us the promise of eternal life.

Playwright Friedrich Schiller said, "Forgiveness is the divinest of victories." This great news of the victory over sin needs to be

shared all over the world.

SHARE OBEDIENTLY - 13:45-48

Not everyone is going to receive the message of salvation with open arms and open hearts, but we must remember that whether a person accepts Christ is not up to us and our efforts. It is God's job through the Holy Spirit to convict a person of their need for Christ and call them into a relationship with Him. He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners.

Our job is simply to be obedient to Him and the commission that He has given to us as His children to be His ambassadors across the world.

If you sense that God is calling you to a career as a missionary, you can contact the IMB at 1-800-I-CAN-GO-1. Information on short-term overseas opportunities can be obtained by calling 1-800-888-VOLS. For information on missions opportunities in North America, call 1-800-462-8657. Whatever He is calling you to do, be obedient!

Daniels is pastor of Monticello Church, Monticello.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Freedom

Colossians 2:6-23

By Laura Russell

Legalism in Paul's day concerned such issues as diet, festival days and religious ceremonies. In these verses, Paul tells why such rules that appear "spiritual" can actually lead a person away from God. In this letter to the Colossians, Paul portrays the Christian life very optimistically. The Christian life gives you freedom from all the religious "stuff" and allows you to live a full life because of all God has done in Christ for you.

FREE THROUGH CHRIST (vv. 8-12).

"Rooted" refers to something which happened in the past but continues to exercise an influence in the present. When the Colossians were converted, they were rooted in Christ. That condition still existed. They did not

need another source of life and nourishment. They needed to grow as they drew upon the resources of Christ.

When we know Jesus Christ, we don't need to seek God by means of other religions, cults or unbiblical philosophies as these Colossians were doing. Christ alone holds the answers to the true meaning of life, because He is life. He is the unique source of knowledge and power for the Christian life. No Christian needs anything else than what Christ has provided to be saved. We are complete in Him and He sets us free.

FREE FOR LIFE IN CHRIST (vv. 13-15).

We can enjoy our new life in Christ because we have joined him in his death and resurrection. Our evil desires, our



Russell

bondage to and love for sin died with Him. The law has been "nailed to the cross". When we join Christ in His resurrection life, we can have unbroken fellowship with God and freedom from sin. To describe the absolute adequacy of what Christ has brought to the Colossian Christians,

Paul used examples of circumcision and baptism. While circumcision was a sign of the Jews covenant with God, when Jesus died, it was no longer necessary as a step of faith.

Now our commitment to God is written on our hearts, not our bodies. Christ has set us free by a spiritual operation, not a physical one. Baptism is a sign of this new covenant. When we are baptized, we are identified with Christ. Our old, sinful life is dead and buried. That doesn't mean we will never sin again; we will. The difference is that before we were saved, we were slaves to our sinful nature, but now we are free to live for Christ.

FREE TO WORSHIP ONLY CHRIST (vv. 16-18).

The false teachers claimed that God was far away and could be approached only through angels. They taught that people had to worship angels in order to reach God. This is unscriptural. The Bible teaches that angels are God's servants and it forbids worshipping them. (Ex. 20:3,4; Rev. 22:8,9) These false teachers had a self-made religion. They were trying to deny the body by saying it was evil, but, in fact, because of their desire for attention, they were actually obsessed by it.

Paul told the Colossian Christians not to let others criticize their diet or religious ceremonies. Instead of outward observance, they should focus of faith in Christ alone. Our worship, traditions, and ceremonies can help bring us close to God, but more important than how we worship is who we worship, and that is Christ.

FREE TO LIVE FOR CHRIST (vv. 20-23).

Paul is declaring to the Colossians that because of their

spiritual freedom they had no reason to submit to human rules and rituals. We cannot reach up to God by following rules of self-denial or by practicing religion. Keeping rules or laws will not earn salvation. The good news is that God reaches down to man, and we respond. Self-made religions focus on human effort; Christianity focuses on Christ's work. Our salvation does not depend on our own discipline and rule-keeping, but on the power of Christ's death and resurrection. People should be able to see a difference between the way Christians and non-Christians live. Christian growth is a lifelong process. We do not automatically have all good thoughts and attitudes. If we keep listening to God, we will be changing all the time. Having spiritual freedom means Christians are freed from living by human rules and rituals, but it does not mean we are freed to live any way we want. We are to live for Christ.

Russell is member of First Church, McComb.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Church of McComb is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that are held in the McComb area. The news items should be submitted to the Baptist Church of McComb.

News items should be submitted to the Baptist Church of McComb, P.O. Box 111, McComb, MS 38901.

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THE BAPTIST

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Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Send news and photographs to: Baptist Church of McComb, P.O. Box 111, McComb, MS 38901.



Moselle Memorial Church, Moselle



Buddy Keys and Chip Price



GAs of Lexie Church, Tylertown

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IVZ XIFZ JVGH GYWS,
GYJX FG FX LOFGGWV,
IVZ GYJX FG DWYHEWZ
TYOFXG GH XJMMWO,
IVZ GH OFXW MOHS
GYW ZWIZ GYW
GYFOZ ZIN:
KJQW
GLWVGN-MHJO:
MHOGN-XFU

Clue: F = I

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: John 20:27

Buddy Keyes, on behalf of First Church, Richton, presented Chip Price with a check to fund a day at the Baptist Children's Village October 5.

Don Mooney of Moselle Memorial Church, Moselle, became concerned about the legal challenges Judge Roy Moore is facing in Alabama. Mooney and Keith Thompson, pastor, had Ten Commandment yard signs made and offered them to the church. People all over the community have now purchased the signs. Mooney may be contacted at (601) 582-9428 Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9 a.m.-noon.

First Church, Calhoun City, held a groundbreaking service for their new Christian Activities, Recreation, and Enrichment Center September 28. The center will be complete with a gym, youth area, weight room, activity room, lounge, and classrooms. Pictured

(from left) are Jimmy Vance, interim pastor, and Woody Jones.

First Church, Potts Camp, celebrated Old Fashioned Day October 26 in their new sanctuary. Pictured are Sherrill and Jim Buchanan, pastor, with their granddaughters Amanda and Brittany. They had horses, wagons, stage coaches, and old cars. Ladies presented skits and there was blue grass singing and a parade.

The GAs and Mission Friends of Beulah Church, Myrtle, recently held Christmas in August for children having surgery at Union County Baptist Hospital. They put together gift bags with coloring books, colors, books, and puzzles.

The Kids Kollection Children's Choir at First Church, Terry, enjoyed Summer Fun in the

Son Camp at Percy Quinn State Park, near McComb, June 26-29. The children enjoyed Bible lessons and music, sports, paddleboats, swimming, and crafts. Camp will be held again in the summer of 2004 and First



Potts Camp Old Fashion Day, Potts Camp

Church invites all area children to attend. The Children's Choir, renamed Joyful Noise, meets Sundays at 4 p.m. For more information, contact (601) 878-5735, (601) 878-5597, or www.fbcterry.org.

The 4-6th grade GAs of Crossroads Church, Pelahatchie, participated in a tea party at the church. In September they learned about GA-Past and Present. Pictured (from top, clockwise) are Amber Ensign, Haley Ferguson, Haley Simpson, Kristen Keen, Erica Counelison, Tiphani Craft, Jessica Varner, and Ashley Johnson.

First Church, McLain, celebrated their centennial anniversary October 12. Michael Street, pastor, brought the morning message. George Berger, Mississippi Baptist Historical Commission, presented a letter of commendation and certificate. Carmen Green read the history. Special music was presented by Teresa Green Browning. The centennial message was preached by John Henry, director of George/Greene Area Missions. Their fellowship hall building was dedicated in January 2003.

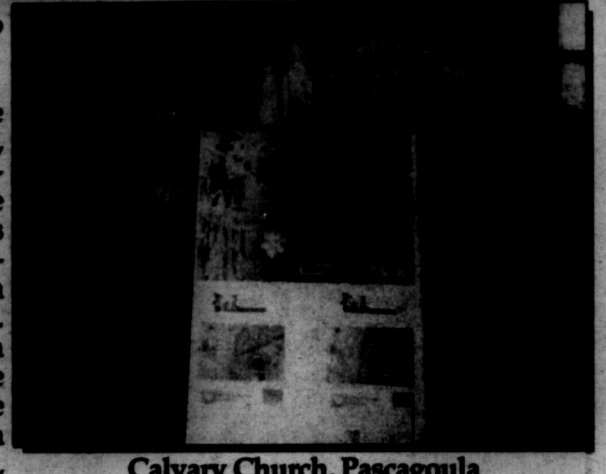
Tino Trevino, pastor at New Life and Hope Hispanic Mission, Sunflower, recently baptized two in an outdoor service. The baptisms were held in a portable baptistery which Calvary Chapel, Parchman, provides to their missions. Pictured are Trevino, a candi-

date, and Antonio Vasquez.

The GAs of Lexie Church, Tylertown, held a ceremony honoring the GAs for the past years accomplishments on September 30. Pictured (from left, front) are MacKenzie Todora, Micah Kennedy, Claudia Johnson, Whitney Johnson, Lindsay Venable, (back) Catherine Shepherd, Ashley Chance, and Emily Venable.

Calvary Church, Pascagoula, held a Margaret Lackey Mission March September 28. The goal of \$500 was exceeded. Pictured (from left) are Kathy Duren, Doris Thomas, and Johnny Beaver, pastor.

Camp Creek Church, Guntown, will celebrate Rally Day November 16 at 10:45 a.m. David Hamilton, West Heights Church, Pontotoc, will be speaking. A meal will follow. For more information, call (662) 869-5474.



Calvary Church, Pascagoula



Tino Trevino and Antonio Vasquez



Jimmy Vance and Woody Jones

www.mbc.org



GAs of Crossroads Church, Pelahatchie



First Church Terry Kids Kollection Choir, Terry



Centennial First Church McLain, McLain